

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP  
PLANNING AND DESIGN COMMITTEE  
SPECIAL MEETING  
Mansfield Downtown Partnership Office  
1244 Storrs Road**

**Tuesday, April 5, 2011**

**MINUTES**

Members: Steve Bacon, Karla Fox, Jon Hand, Frank McNabb, Peter Millman, Ruth Moynihan, Betsy Paterson, and Karin Randolph

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm and Kathleen Paterson

Guests: Board member Alex Roe; Mansfield Director of Planning Greg Padick

Storrs Center Team: Tim Andre and Norm Goldman (Desman Associates), Sam Gardner (Gregg Wies & Gardner Architects), Macon Toledano (LeylandAlliance), Geoff Fitzgerald (BL Companies), Lon Hultgren (Town of Mansfield)

**1. Call to Order**

Steve Bacon called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

**2. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**3. Approval of Minutes from February 15, 2011 and March 15, 2011**

Betsy Paterson made a motion to approve the minutes of February 15, 2011. Frank McNabb seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Betsy Paterson made a motion to approve the minutes of March 15, 2011. Frank McNabb seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with abstentions from Peter Millman and Ruth Moynihan.

**4. Review of DRAFT Zoning Permit Application for Parking Garage and Intermodal Center**

Mr. Bacon introduced Tim Andre, Norm Goldman, Sam Gardner, Macon Toledano, and Lon Hultgren.

Mr. Bacon noted that this was the Committee's third meeting on the parking garage and intermodal center.

He reviewed the process for authorization of a zoning permit for Phases 1A and 1B buildings. He noted that the process will be very similar for the parking garage and the intermodal center except that the applicant is the Town of Mansfield as the Town will be the owner of the facility. He said the Committee may be asked to act on a motion, at its next meeting on April 19, that the plans conform to the Storrs Center design guidelines.

Mr. Hultgren noted that he is working on supplemental information for the zoning permit application regarding information required in the Storrs Center Special Design District regulations.

Mr. Hultgren referred to the site plans on the table. He noted that Village Street now wraps around the intermodal center for better access to the intermodal center and the garage. Mr. Hultgren said he, otherwise, does not believe the site plans have changed a lot since the last meeting except that the intermodal center has grown to approximately 3,000 square feet. The garage is approximately 300,000 square feet.

Greg Padick said he thought the new road pattern will make it easier to access the garage and the intermodal center. The Town Traffic Authority also reviewed this layout and agreed that it is improved with respect to access. Macon Toledano noted that previously the access was not direct (was around buildings) but now the access goes right past the intermodal center.

In response to a question from Ms. Moynihan, Mr. Gardner said that there will be several bus pull-offs.

Peter Millman noted the diagonal parking on part of Village Street and asked if this permanent. Mr. Toledano replied in the affirmative and reiterated that he would like consensus from the Committee that the diagonal parking is acceptable.

Mr. Millman noted his concern about pedestrian access behind the garage going to and from the Phase 1A buildings. How will pedestrians be accommodated, as this will be a natural path that they will take.

Geoff Fitzgerald said the intention is for pedestrians to use Village Street. Mr. Millman noted that the street behind the garage will be the quicker way. Mr. Toledano said that the Bishop lot will accommodate some visitors and that will be closer to access the Phase 1A buildings.

Mr. Millman expressed his concern about safety on the road behind the garage. Mr. Gardner noted that the road will be lit, and there could be some traffic calming.

Mr. Bacon asked if Mr. Millman's concern could be addressed. Mr. Toledano said a sidewalk would need to be at least 5 feet wide per the Storrs Center design guidelines. Mr. Fitzgerald said the land becomes more constrained near the entrance to the garage. Mr. Millman wondered if a sidewalk could go on the opposite side of the garage. Mr. Goldman said there will need to be enough turning radii for the buses. Mr. Toledano also noted the constraints by wetlands.

Mr. Hultgren also said that traffic calming could be put in as needed.

**Mr. Toledano said the team will go back and see if pedestrian access can be improved behind the garage.**

Frank McNabb asked if all utility services will go in at once in Village Street. Mr. Hultgren replied in the affirmative. Mr. Padick said per conditions on the Storrs Center regulations approval in 2007, the road will have to be built out before the garage opens.

Karla Fox asked about parking for the Post Office. Mr. Hultgren said this is planned to be reconfigured and Mr. Toledano noted that the Post Office is relocating some of its operations to the Storrs Post Office. This will necessitate a need for more parking spaces.

With respect to the diagonal parking, Mr. Toledano referred to the presentation the team did at the prior Planning and Design Committee meeting. The issue was that diagonal parking would allow there to be more parking spaces for visitors to the retail. He said this idea was discussed with Mr. Padick, Mr. Hultgren and the Town Traffic Authority.

Ms. Paterson noted that she had experienced diagonal parking in Ventura, CA and it worked much better for traffic flow.

Mr. Bacon asked how original 15 to 16 feet wide sidewalks on Village Street compare to other areas. Mr. Fitzgerald said the sidewalk widths vary throughout the project but the minimum currently being planned is 8 feet.

Mr. Bacon asked if cafes on Village Street sidewalks can still be accommodated? Mr. Fitzgerald said “yes,” as a 5 foot minimum is required for a passable area.

Mr. Andre went over the garage layout. There will be a place for shared cars. Floors one through three will be for visitors with the upper floors nested for residents. Every floor has a lobby space overlooking the Village Street or the intermodal center. The stairwells will be open with glass which will help with passive security.

Mr. Andre said the only piece that has changed since the last meeting is the facades as they got rid of the railings and are designing with mesh. The roof has been simplified and there will not be a beacon-type light.

Karin Randolph asked about the issue brought up at the last meeting about the heat in the elevator shaft. Mr. Andre said the elevator shaft will be ventilated and they are looking at heating and cooling options.

Mr. Padick asked about the color of the garage. Mr. Andre said conceptually they are looking at a gray precast color. Mr. Padick said people will be interested in the color of the garage.

Mr. Gardner said the intermodal center will be more prominent with the reconfiguration of the street. He showed the Committee the massing of the structure. He said to extend the facade, he did screening and created an outdoor space under a pergola.

Mr. Gardner said the intermodal center will be the place of interaction between people. It is proposed to include restrooms, an information center and multi-purpose bike space on the first floor. The second floor is proposed to have showers and restrooms for bike users, and the elevator lobby for the parking garage. The only access to the second floor bike area would be by an access card. He said he is pricing out the cost of offices over the first floor.

Mr. Gardner said there will be screening in front of the building. Alex Roe said she would like to see texture on the front of the building.

Mr. Hultgren said the downstairs restrooms will be public and monitored.

Mr. Millman asked if residents could rent space in the bike area? Mr. Gardner replied in the affirmative.

Mr. Hultgren reiterated that the garage has places for car sharing vehicles and charging stations for electric cars. He said that UConn has asked for proposals for shared car services and the Town would have spaces in its garage as well as UConn's garage.

Mr. Bacon asked about a meeting that was held with transit providers. Mr. Hultgren said the potential transit providers (WRTD, UConn, Peter Pan) appreciated the ability to stage buses for an extended period of time.

Mr. Hultgren noted that the intermodal center will have the technology to tie into the ITS on the buses so that riders will know exactly where the buses are and their time of arrival at the intermodal center.

Ms. K. Paterson asked if elevations would be provided.

Ms. van Zelm said that the formal zoning permit application is expected on April 12 with the Committee meeting on April 19. Ms. van Zelm said the plan is for the public hearing to be held by the Partnership on May 4. Mr. Padick said that he can place conditions on the application, if needed, after the public hearing is held as the review is an administrative review.

Jon Hand said he had hoped for more traditional New England architecture. Mr. Gardner said the thinking was to do more of a "quiet" building as there is a lot of going on in this area and many of the other buildings are more traditional. Ms. Paterson said the goal was for the parking garage to not be intrusive.

**Mr. Gardner said he will project a model with elevations at the Committee meeting on April 19.**

Mr. Bacon noted that except for the sidewalk behind the parking garage, the Committee seemed ok with the general direction the garage and the intermodal center are proceeding.

## **5. Review and Action on Village Street and Transit Pathways Layout**

**Mr. Millman made a motion to approve the recommendation of partial diagonal parking on Village Street. Mr. Hand seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. The Committee agreed to pass along a record of this motion to Director of Planning Greg Padick.**

## **6. Topics for Next Meeting and Set Meeting Date**

Mr. Bacon said the meeting on April 19 may include a motion that the parking garage and intermodal center comply with the Storrs Center design guidelines.

**Mr. Padick asked that information on color options for the parking garage and intermodal center be brought to the Committee meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Gardner said he will bring some material samples.**

Mr. Millman said he would like to see some color options other than neutral. Can the Committee see some accent colors? Ms. Roe noted that color needs to be balanced with quality.

## **7. Adjourn**

Mr. McNabb made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Paterson seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:25 pm.

*Minutes prepared by Cynthia van Zelm*